

LMRLAC – October 25, 2007

LOWER MERRIMACK RIVER LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

October 25, 2007

Members:

- ✓ = present

- ✓ Bob Robbins (Chair) – Hudson
- ✓ Kathryn Nelson (Vice Chair) -- Nashua
- ✓ Karen Archambault (Secretary) -- Nashua
- Glenn McKibben (Treasurer) – Litchfield
- Cynthia Ruonala (Public Relations) – Nashua
- ✓ George May - Merrimack
- ✓ Jim Barnes – Hudson
- Ray Peeples – Litchfield
- Stan Kazlouskas – Hudson

Also in attendance:

- Minda Shaheen, NRPC
- Beth Chestnutt, Merrimack, potential new member

The meeting was called to order at 7:10pm in the east wing downstairs in the Nashua Public Library. Members agreed to change the order of business and discuss the Corridor Management Plan update while Minda was in attendance.

Members briefly discussed possible dates for the combined November/December meeting. Members present tentatively agreed on Thursday, November 29. Kath will send an e-mail to all members to find out if that date works best for the most members. Bob indicated he would not be able to attend on November 29. Kath will call Cynthia about the meeting date.

Kath mentioned that Steve Couture, DES Rivers Coordinator, has offered to come down to NRPC to review the corridor management plan with Minda, Kath, and any other members who can attend. Members indicated their preference that Steve attend the next regular LMRLAC meeting. Kath will contact Steve to see whether he can attend the November/December LMRLAC meeting.

Corridor Management Plan Update

Minda handed out hard copies of the draft plan that she had e-mailed at the beginning of the week. She stated that Cynthia had stopped by NRPC early in the week and had picked up a copy as well.

Members asked about missing information on water withdrawals, dams, and on historic and architectural structures. Minda indicated she's working on getting updated information on the water withdrawals. Data on these three topics are being pulled mostly from the old plan, but she's waiting for some details.

Minda stated that photographs, figures, and maps haven't been added yet. Cynthia had borrowed the copy of maps that Minda had brought to the June meeting to use during her plan review. Kath will ask Cynthia to bring the maps to the next meeting to have them available at the meeting for further review.

Minda indicated that the plan will be proofread and reviewed by NRPC staff prior to completion.

Items discussed during the meeting are as follows:

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- Page 34, Comprehensive Shoreland Protection Act updates: Kath gave Minda a copy of the CSPA update summary. Kath also mentioned that the new rules will go into effect in April of 2008, and the DES rules committee will hold its final meeting on Monday. Minda will also check materials in the Municipal Law Lecture series about the CSPA update. After some discussion, members agreed that the plan should discuss the new CSPA rather than the changes from the previous act.
- Page 1, purpose of the plan, versus page 46, list of recommended actions: Bob pointed out that the plan purpose emphasizes guidance to the local communities, but the first recommended action discusses lobbying the Legislature. After some discussion, members agreed that local action takes a priority over action at the State level, but that lobbying legislators also has a place under recommended actions. Minda will add a recommended action to lobby and support local communities in adopting river protection standards.
- Some discussion followed on whether the recommended actions should be ranked. Members agreed to give this some thought before the next meeting, and that part of the next meeting will be devoted to ranking the actions.
- Page 50, action 4.2: members discussed water quality monitoring programs. Minda will reword the action to refer to programs in addition to the Volunteer River Assessment Program (VRAP), and change 'facilitate' to 'facilitate and support' or similar.
- Page 50, action 4.3: Kath pointed out that dishwashing detergent is more of an issue for phosphates rather than laundry detergent at this point. Members also briefly discussed the issues of such things as anti-bacterial soaps and pharmaceuticals, their presence in waste water, and potential impacts at the wastewater plant and downstream.
- George suggested that the Web site address be visible on the plan, and suggested it be part of the end notes on each page.
- Kath suggested Minda add a recommended action on recruiting and retaining members and suggestions on how to do that.
- Members pointed out several issues with the table on page 9, Public Waterbodies. Minda indicated the information for the chart came from DES. George stated he would look into that with DES. Several of the ponds referenced in the table list an incorrect status (natural, raised by damming, artificial impoundment). Musquash Pond is missing from the list as well. Kath pointed out that an open space plan from 2005 included some information about Musquash and suggested that plan may list some goals that would apply to the Corridor Management Plan as well.

Bob said he would give Minda a copy of the information he used for his presentation to the Hudson Conservation Commission from several months ago, which included information on LID.

Members should send changes and comments using Track Changes in the document, send them to Minda, and c.c. the rest of the committee.

Membership

Kath introduced Beth Chestnutt, a Merrimack resident who may be interested in joining LMRLAC. George and Beth will get together to submit membership paperwork, as George is due for reappointment.

Minutes

The September 27, 2007 minutes were approved without changes.

Elections

The Nominating Committee, consisting of Kath and Karen, presented a slate of officers as follows:

Chair	Bob Robbins
Vice Chair	Kath Nelson
Secretary	Karen Archambault
Treasurer	Glenn McKibben

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Public Outreach Coordinator Cynthia Ruonala

Nominations were open to the floor; no additional nominations were brought forward. Motion to elect the slate was made by Jim, seconded by Kath, and passed unanimously.

Local Updates

George brought members up to date on the status with his communication with Boott Mill Dam personnel in Lowell. So far he has received no response to his request that LMRLAC be notified prior to any plans to change water level for repairs, etc. Members approved of George's plan to re-contact Boott Mill Dam requesting their FERC license number, stating that the next step will be to request through FERC that they notify us prior to a change in the dam.

George gave a status on the Protected River signs. He went out to inspect the Sagamore and Taylors Falls bridges to determine likely spots for the signs. On the Taylors Falls bridge, George stated that the signs could probably be attached to lightposts along the bridge – he said city signs are already attached to some. George recommends that the Protected River signs go on the lightpost previous to the city sign, one in each direction. If DOT does not like that idea, then additional poles would have to go in. For the Sagamore Bridge, George said the situation is more complicated. George thinks it's possible we may not get approval, because it's apparently part of the F.E. Everett Turnpike. Because that makes it a DOT bridge, DOT personnel would have to put up signs. George said the current river sign eastbound is hard to see, but the westbound sign is a little bit better. The river signs are roughly 2 feet by 3 feet in size. George said he might ask for a larger Protected River sign to more closely match the scale of the river signs. He also will request a single sign on the bike/pedestrian path on the bridge. There is an existing post along the path that probably has enough room on it for a Protected River sign.

George plugged the book Swampwalker's Journal by David Carroll.

George also mentioned that he'd been to Merrill Park recently and that one of the concrete picnic tables has been damaged and should be removed. He suggested that perhaps one of the other tables, currently overgrown, could be moved to take the place of the broken one. George said there's a nice network of trails in the park, but the park itself is not maintained. Members briefly discussed the problem of parks and their maintenance in communities where the Recreation Department focuses on playing fields. It was mentioned that the LAC should ask NRPC about the recreation guide/trail study and when NRPC would be working on or completing that study.

Kath followed up on the e-mail she had forwarded to members from Amy Gill of Nashua's DPW about the status of the CSO outfall in South Nashua near the Nashua Country Club.

Kath proposed that members vote Paul Wiggins as an associate member, which passed without objection. Kath will also ask Millie if she'd be interested in being an associate member.

Kath brought up a question Millie had asked her about trash along a path near the Sagamore Bridge. Members discussed the situation and suggested publicizing a trail clean up day, if Millie would be willing to head the effort, directing volunteers to collect trash, and calling DPW to schedule a pickup of the trash collected. George said he'd be willing to publicize the event, and that he has trash bags available. Beth volunteered to help as well. Kath will contact Millie to see if she would like to do that.

Kath will forward information to members on the watershed conference coming up in November.

George mentioned that his last newsletter 'bounced' to several e-mail addresses. He asked whether we should send a notice to the paper about the mailing list. Members agreed that we

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should publicize the plan update once it's complete, and could mention the mailing list at that time.

Kath also brought up an upcoming road race in Mine Falls Park that Millie is involved in, and that Millie had asked whether LMRLAC had any information to display at the event. Members agreed that a recommended action should be added to the plan to create a brochure and to solicit funds to do so. Kath will notify Minda about adding this to the plan.

The Web site was briefly discussed. Among the ideas discussed was to change the wording for membership, and to review the content of the Web site periodically to make sure it's up to date.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm. Next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, November 29 at 7pm at the Nashua Public Library.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Archambault
secretary